

INSIDE INFORMATION

#2 JULY '89

PRISONERS OF CLASS CONFLICT, INJUSTICE AND OPPRESSION, STRUGGLES WITHIN PRISON WALLS.

Uprising at Risley Remand

It has just been announced that the notorious Grisley Risley remand centre is to be closed and demolished, following the riots in April/May against overcrowding, squalor and uneatable food. Even the investigating Committee announced that this was not unique to Risley, but typified the general condition of Britain's prisons, which are being filled to the point where they are bursting at the seams. Don't take our word for it. Below are some extracts from recently published Government figures.

Risley Male Remand is to be replaced with a new 'training' prison. Training for what?.



H.A.L.O.W Help and Advice Line. 'We are prisoners' wives and families for prisoners' wives and families', CONTACT: 30 Blackford St., Winson Green, B'ham. TEL: 021 523.4898. MARIE

The truth about Britain's prisons

On 1 February 1988 Britain had the highest absolute prison population in Western Europe. Relative to its population size it had the highest prison population of any country other than Luxemburg; higher than West Germany the previous leader which has substantially reduced its figures by increased use of remand and alternatives to custody; higher than Turkey which is renowned amongst human rights campaigners as a country which locks its people up in large quantities for long periods of time on spurious charges and treats them barbarously.

PRISON STATISTICS 1987

- The average population (including those in police cells) was 48,963, 4% higher than in 1986.
- The average remand population (including those in police cells) was 11,163, 11% higher than in 1986.
- On 30 June there were 9,696 young offenders in custody.

Men

- 41,268 men were sentenced to immediate custody, 4% more than in 1986 and 40% more than in 1977.
- There were an additional 13,600 receptions for fine default.
- On 30 June there were 20,053 men in custody, including 466 fine defaulters.

Women

- 3,383 women were sentenced to immediate custody, 1% more than in 1986 and 48% more than in 1977.
- There were 716 receptions for fine default.
- On 30 June there were 1,180 women in custody, including 20 fine defaulters.

Black prisoners

- 14% of the male and 23% of the female prison population were from what the Home Office statistics describe as 'ethnic minority groups,' a rise of 1.5% and 6% respectively since 1985.

Brutality in Scottish prisons

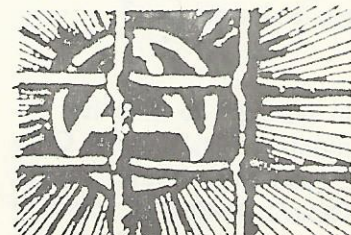
Sammy Ralston is currently on hungerstrike in Peterhead. When he wrote this letter, he was on the 40th day. In April he staged a roof-top protest against prison brutality and the introduction of the poll-tax.

I've now spent 20 months in solitary in their control units including a year in their barbaric 'cages' which re-opened two months ago. Two humans presently lie in them.

The 12 men in this control unit (Peterhead) are let out one at a time and are told 10-minute slop-out time. A two-minute warning is given, then the con is grabbed by four to ten screws, if not moving fast enough. A prisoner presently awaits to sue Malcolm Rifkind for attempted murder in this control block. [CONTINUED OVERLEAF]

Country	Prison Population on 1.2.88	Prisoners per 100,000 population
Luxemburg	382	103.4
United Kingdom	55,729	98.2
Austria	7,297	96.0
Finland	4,374	93.0
France	52,494	92.0
Turkey	50,160	90.2
West Germany	53,039	86.7

INSIDE INFO



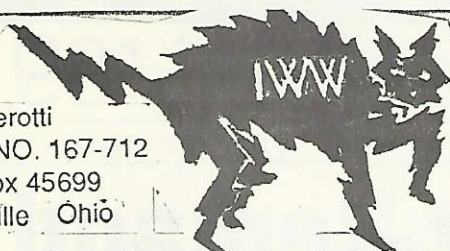
Edinburgh EH1.

CO PHCI, 11 Forth St.

WOMEN ARE 50% MORE LIKELY TO BE GAOLED IN BRITAIN THAN THEY WERE IN 1977
ONE QUARTER OF THE FEMALE PRISONERS IN BRITAIN ARE FROM 'ETHNIC MINORITIES'

THE WOBBLES' BLOODY STRUGGLE TO UNIONISE THE CAPTIVE WORKERS OF OHIO PENAL INDUSTRIES

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ORGANIZATION
EDUCATION
EMANCIPATION

Industrial Workers Of The World

APPEAL FOR HELP APPEAL FOR HELP
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My name is John Perotti. I am a prison organiser, with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and a jailhouse lawyer here at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility in Lucasville, Ohio. I personally am litigating over 25 lawsuits against prison officials for my fellow prisoners, and 15 lawsuits in which I am the plaintiff. I have been beaten by guards on over 15 occasions. I have been sprayed with high powered water hoses, maced, gas grenades thrown in my cell, subjected to humiliating strip searches with lewd comments by guards, all my mail censored, and my family harrassed, all because of my activism in prison. YET, I continue to FIGHT. WE (IWW) are presently attempting to organise the prisoners, and have filed a complaint with the State Employment Relations Board (SERB) in an attempt to classify Ohio prisoners as public employees, in order to obtain safer working conditions, minimum wages, and the right to collective bargaining."

In his fight to unionise the multi-million dollar Ohio Prison Industries, whose captive workers are paid 10 cents an hour and fed like pigs, John Perotti has also been brutally beaten by

guards using boots and truncheons, when he was handcuffed in a wheelchair. Later, when he was on the forty-second day of a hunger-strike and taken to hospital, handcuffed and leg-ironed to a wheelchair, John was seriously assaulted by a group of guards using truncheons, then dragged by the leg-irons to a holding cage six feet by three feet wide where he was severely kicked in the face, head and ribs before being locked in the cage and having a chemical fire-extinguisher sprayed over him. The cage was then opened, and John was struck on the forehead with a pair of steel handcuffs. This caused a gash which later required six stitches in the Emergency Ward of a local hospital. All this for fighting for prisoners' rights and trying to unionise the prison industry. The prison has been officially recognised by the IWW as a job branch of its Public Service Workers' Union but, of course, the State of Ohio, scene of many violent union struggles, is fighting tooth and nail, with unlimited resources, to prevent this coming into effect.

John has, for most of five years, been kept in a J1 Supermax Block. His only clothing is a white jumpsuit. He is stripsearched everytime he leaves or enters the block.

[SAMMY RALSTON, CONTINUED]

Mental torture continues around me. I've had four serious beatings and the odd kicking as well. I have 'alleged' assault charges against me here and in Aberdeen; I've civil actions against the Secretary of State for torture in Barlinnie and in Inverness court cells. I've three appeals pending. All I can say in this hell, is greetings and solidarity to others in my position, courage, strength, determination.

Sammy Ralston

Readers are encouraged to send messages of support to Sammy at 1221-88, HMP Peterhead Prison, Aberdeenshire, Scotland.

BELOW. Prison organiser John Perotti and Paul Poulos (Right) of the IWW, in SOCF.



His hands are cuffed behind his back, and his legs put in irons on every such occasion. He is allowed two one-hour walks per week in a 'dog-kennel', and two showers when is given a 1 inch cube of soap.

John recently lost a court case over lack of medical treatment in the prison, and was ordered to pay costs, which he, of course, cannot afford. Neither can the IWW, a militant, but relatively small organisation. If these costs are not paid, every one of the pending lawsuits against prison officials will be dismissed. ALL of the small gains that have been made, at such a tremendous cost in human courage and suffer-

ing, will be just swept away by the stroke of a clerk's pen. We ask you to make a donation to John's Defence Fund, **NO MATTER HOW SMALL**, to help this courageous fighter in his struggle, before all is trampled by the iron heel of the State.

"Thank you for your time. There is a fight going on in this country inside and outside the prison. I hope you can join with us in breaking down the walls so that one day we may all hold hands together in a world free of brutality, exploitation, racism and sexism.

Yours in strength, unity and solidarity,"

John P.

Please send donations to :
John Perotti Defence,
c/o PH CI,
11 Forth Street,
Edinburgh EH1

